



Visitation House

A LOVING MATERNITY HOME

## **Visitation House Volunteer Policy & Procedure**

Last updated Sept 2023



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## Welcome

Welcome and thank you for your interest in becoming a volunteer with the Visitation House. We hope that you will find volunteering with us an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

Your generous gifts of time, energy, special skills and expertise are deeply appreciated. As a volunteer, you will be supporting women at a most critical time in their lives and helping to provide their new babies with the head start they need and deserve.

This handbook is designed to help provide you with an overview of how our organization functions as well as an informational guide to the policies and procedures for volunteering with us.

## History

Visitation House was conceived in December of 2007 by Fr. Tom Connery, Pastor of St. Peter Catholic Church. Donna Paulin served as our House Mother and Executive Director for many years. It began as a mission of St Peter Catholic Church to help fill the need for pregnant women in crisis who had no place to live. Recognizing the need for independence for mission to grow, it was spun off from the church and became Visitation House Inc., a 501(c) not for profit independent legal entity in 2015.

## Mission

The mission of Visitation House is to provide a safe, secure, and caring environment for pregnant women in crisis and to prepare women to live as self-sufficient as possible when they leave.

We offer safety, security, personal development, empowerment, and growth for the mother. We do this through counseling, case management, positive reinforcement, community resources and assistance in reaching individual personal goals. Visitation House is a temporary home for women during their pregnancy and after childbirth.

## Organization

The Visitation House is a Florida corporation that is a registered as a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization. Our volunteer Board of Directors oversee the Visitation House program, set policy, develop procedures, hire employees, fulfill reporting requirements, establish, and manage the budget. The Board of Directors authorizes a number of temporary and permanent committees who raise funds, oversee resident programs, manage the facility and grounds.



## Organization's commitments

The Board and Staff agree to:

- Provide all necessary orientation, training, and supervision for your volunteer assignment.
- To provide you with clear guidance and instructions.
- To change your assignment or add new duties only through mutual agreement.
- Keep you informed of any changes in schedule.
- Validate and initial your Volunteer Sign-In Log.
- Provide you with a letter of reference when requested.

## Volunteers' commitments

As a Volunteer you agree to:

- Become familiar with and adhere to the policies and procedures as set forth in this Handbook.
- Make every effort to provide at least 24 hours' notice if you are unable to fulfill your assignment (*except in an emergency*).
- Learn about the Visitation House mission and vision and spread the word about our goals in your community.

## Residents' commitments

All Residents follow rules set forth in the Resident Handbook. In addition.

- Residents will treat volunteers with respect in speech, dress, promptness, and participation.
- Residents will respect the confidentiality of the volunteer.
- Residents will be grateful for the time, talent and personal support provided by the volunteer.
- Residents will never contact volunteer directly for assistance without the express approval of the House Director or Volunteer Coordinator.



# Steps to Becoming a Volunteer

## Volunteer application

All prospective volunteers will need to complete a *Volunteer Application* form.

## Interview

Before you start, a staff supervisor or volunteer coordinator will conduct an initial phone or in-person interview to gain further insight into your interests, abilities, and availability for current or future assignments. This will allow us to get to know you. And it is a great time to ask us questions, too!

## Orientation

As a new volunteer you will be provided with an orientation training to introduce you the Visitation House, as well as to welcome you as part of the team. Orientations will be conducted on an ongoing, as needed basis throughout the year.

## Training

Each volunteer will receive specific training on how to do his/her assigned tasks if that is required. Most assignments will include on-the-job mentoring with an experienced volunteer or staff person. Be sure to ask any questions you have or request further training if you don't feel prepared. Don't assume anything! We want you to be successful.

# Contact Information

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Answering Service (\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_

House Director (\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Coordinator (\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_



## Policies & Procedures

### Equal Opportunity

The Visitation House Volunteer Program welcomes volunteers of all backgrounds and abilities and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, or any other inappropriate basis in its volunteer selection process. Due to the nature of our program, many of our volunteer roles are restricted to women, but there are plenty of opportunities for men to support the program.

### Anti-discrimination & Sexual Harassment Policy

The Visitation House has a zero-tolerance policy toward any form of discrimination or sexual harassment in our program, and this includes residents, guests, volunteers, vendors, and staff. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, slurs, jokes, and other verbal, visual or physical conduct of a sexual or demeaning nature. In addition to being responsible for their own conduct, board members and staff must ensure that volunteers contribute to an environment that is free of discrimination or sexual harassment.

It is extremely important that any individual who believes he/she is subject to, or has witnessed, unlawful discrimination or sexual harassment, *immediately* report it so it can be dealt with appropriately.

### Drug Free Environment

Use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the residence or when performing volunteer activities anywhere is prohibited, as is the abuse of any prescription drug, or reporting for duty under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

### Confidentiality

All information obtained during a volunteer assignment is considered confidential and all volunteers are expected to maintain the strictest level of confidentiality regarding Visitation House and its applicants, residents, and former residents. This includes but is not limited to names and backgrounds of residents, their babies, their employment, and future plans. Volunteers may discuss the program and the residents with other volunteers when such communication facilitates the program but must refrain from any conversations that could be construed as gossip, criticism, dissatisfaction with a person associated with the program, or any other communication that could negatively reflect on the program. This responsibility extends beyond the time that the volunteer is actively at work and continues after volunteers cease to work with the program. **You are never to share your personal address, phone numbers or social media links with the residents.**

### Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest may exist whenever an individual is in a position to directly or indirectly benefit themselves, a family member, other individuals, or another organization with which the individual is affiliated, through the use of their role as a volunteer. Please notify us if you believe that you may have a conflict of interest so that the Board can weigh the risks and benefits.



## Check-in Log

It's important that we log all volunteer hours. You will be responsible for keeping track of time worked during your assignment and for signing in and out in the "Check-In Log" provided. The "Check-In Log" is used to track your volunteer hours for various purposes such as reporting volunteer statistics on grant applications, organizing special events, or in writing reference letters. The "Check-In Log" represents the only permanent record of your volunteer time.

## Attendance

We depend on our volunteers to report for their assignment on time and complete the work agreed to each day and encourage you to honor your commitments; the staff and organization is counting on your support and participation. If you are sick or unable to volunteer due to scheduling conflicts, please notify us as soon as possible. **If you need to adjust your scheduled time or want to come to Visitation House outside your scheduled time you Must contact the House Director of designated Board Member for approval.**

## Use of Privately Owned Vehicle

Should a volunteer need to use their private vehicle on Visitation House business, the volunteer must complete and sign an *Authorization to Use Privately Owned Automobiles* and provide a copy of their valid Florida Driver License and automobile insurance card. The vehicle must be equipped with seat belts and be in safe mechanical/operating condition.

## Health & Safety

Because safety is everyone's job, volunteers are asked to be alert at all times to safety hazards. Unsafe conditions should be reported rather than being handled by volunteers. Please notify us of any assignment which may cause you physical discomfort or which could lead to personal injury, so that the situation can be rectified.

In a **Medical Emergency** requiring immediate attention, the volunteer should call 911 or go directly to the emergency room.

**Volunteer Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Witness:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_